

El Niño to Continue: The strong El Niño conditions that were first forecast in May 1997 are expected to continue through the spring and early summer of 1998 with continued increased rainfall across California and the southeastern United States, and continued milder-than-normal conditions over much of central North America, according to NOAA's latest El Niño advisory.

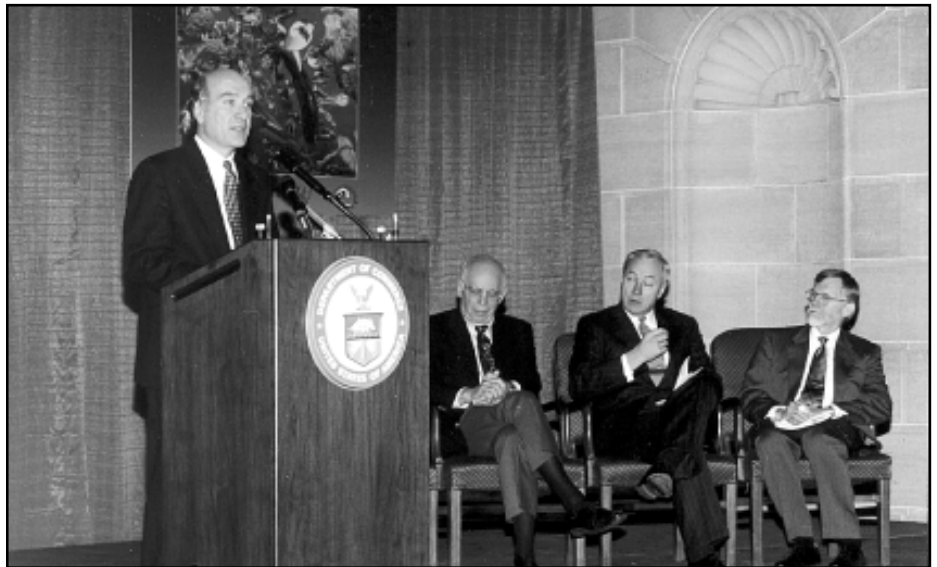
The next two months will follow the pattern of the last two months of abnormal weather. "The severe weather in California and the Southeast will unfortunately continue, and much of the

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south will see increased rainfall and cooler temperatures," announced Commerce Secretary William M. Daley at a February press conference. Director of NOAA's Climate Prediction Center Ants Leetmaa added, "The sea surface temperatures are still well above normal throughout the tropical Pacific Ocean and are expected to remain that way into April and May."

"Providing this type of accurate weather information six months in advance has never been done before and has enabled our communities and businesses to better prepare and protect themselves," Daley said.

OAR Head Receives AMS Honor: Elbert W. "Joe" Friday, Jr., Assistant Administrator for Oceanic and Atmospheric Research, received the American
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Commerce Secretary William M. Daley (at podium) is joined by White House science advisor John Gibbons (left), Navy Secretary John Dalton (center) and NOAA Administrator D. James Baker (right) at the kickoff of the 1998 International Year of the Ocean campaign.

Underwater in Monterey, Earle Joins Daley, Baker in DC

Year of the Ocean Launch Leads to National Conference

In a ceremony at Commerce Department headquarters in Washington, Commerce Secretary William M. Daley launched the International Year of the Ocean in late January, with the announcement of a national conference later this year to focus on the ocean.

"The Department of Commerce will work to coordinate the conference, which will include other Federal agencies, Members of Congress, and interested ocean groups," he said.

"The goal of Year of the Ocean is to highlight the important role the ocean plays in the daily lives of all

Americans and the Ocean Conference will help us do that," Daley added. "One of every six jobs in the U.S. is marine-related, and one-third of the Nation's gross national product is produced in coastal areas through fishing, transportation and recreation. All of these industries are dependent on healthy waters and marine habitats."

The announcement also featured an opportunity for students, the next generation of ocean caretakers, to interact live with National Geographic Explorer-in-Residence and former NOAA Chief Scientist Dr.

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New Sanctuary Chiefs Named for Monterey Bay, Hawaii

Two environmental biologists will be heading up NOAA's largest and newest national marine sanctuaries in the coming year—superintendent William J. Douros at Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary, and manager Allen Tom at the Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale Sanctuary.

In December, Douros was named superintendent of NOAA's largest sanctuary, which spans over 5,300-square miles of coastal waters off central California.

"Bill brings a wonderful combination of policy, marine science, and

operational management background to the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary," said NOAA's Sanctuary and Reserves Division chief Stephanie Thornton. "He is intimately familiar with the Federal, state and local governmental structures and the interests of the people of the central California coast. He is actively involved in many of the most pressing issues now facing the Monterey Bay and national marine sanctuary programs."

The new sanctuary superintendent received a bachelor's degree in environmental biology with honors

in 1981, and a master's degree in marine ecology in 1985, both from the University of California at Santa Barbara. While in graduate school, Douros worked as a lab supervisor and research diver for the school's Marine Science Institute and published papers on the growth, current status and effects of prehistoric hunting by Chumash Indians on black abalone.

The recently established Hawaiian Islands Sanctuary continues under the management of Allen Tom, who has served as on-site liaison at the site since 1994 and guided the

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Helping Students Brings Kudos to NESDIS Secretary

Eveline Cropper-Conquest, a secretary at NOAA's Command and Data Acquisition Station in Wallops, Va., was honored in January by then-Virginia Governor George Allen for her work in tutoring students.

Cropper-Conquest was one of eight people in Virginia to receive a 1997 Governor's Champions in Education Award. Cropper-Conquest was commended for all her contributions toward improving education in Virginia and for helping students pursue and achieve academic excellence.

Cropper-Conquest started a program called HELP, the Horntown Educational Learning Project. It was initially organized to tutor high school students from Horntown, in Accomack County, to achieve better grades. The focus quickly spread to elementary school students as well.

"Miss Eveline," as the children call her, coordinates a group of volunteers who meet at Tabernacle Baptist Church Annex to assist students with their homework and to provide tutoring in various subjects. Miss Eveline also spends extra time beforehand canvassing the Horntown neighborhood, picking up children and taking them to the Annex. When the sessions are over, she takes them home again.

About 150 children have received help with homework or tutoring through HELP.

Cropper-Conquest initiated a summer pre-kindergarten program that graduated 80 two-to-six year old students. These students learned basic skills to keep them from

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Virginia Gov. George Allen at the January ceremony honoring NOAA employee Eveline Cropper-Conquest for her work with Accomack County, Va., high school students.

Request is 5 Percent Higher than Last Year

\$2.1B Budget Request Shows 'Strong' Support

Saying the President's fiscal year 1999 budget "shows strong support for the important mission of NOAA," Commerce Department and NOAA officials released the agency's requested budget of \$2.1 billion, a five percent increase over last year's request.

The budget request "will support advances in achieving our goals such as forecasting the weather and managing our nation's fisheries," said Commerce Secretary William M. Daley. "This budget also provides the resources for two important areas: the Natural Disaster Reduction Initiative and the Clean Water Initiative."

Relative to fiscal year 1998's currently available funds, significant changes in the fiscal year 1999 budget include:

- \$28.3 million to maintain the National Weather Service operational infrastructure and ensure the provision of weather warnings

and forecasts to the public, consistent with the recommendations contained in a study released in October 1997 by General John F. Kelly.

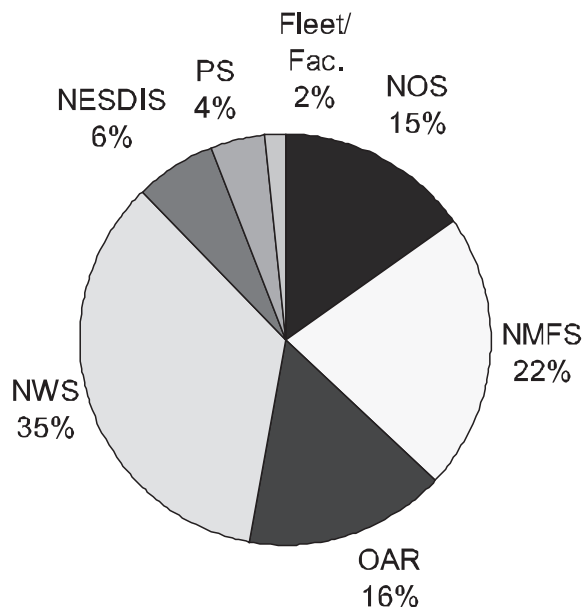
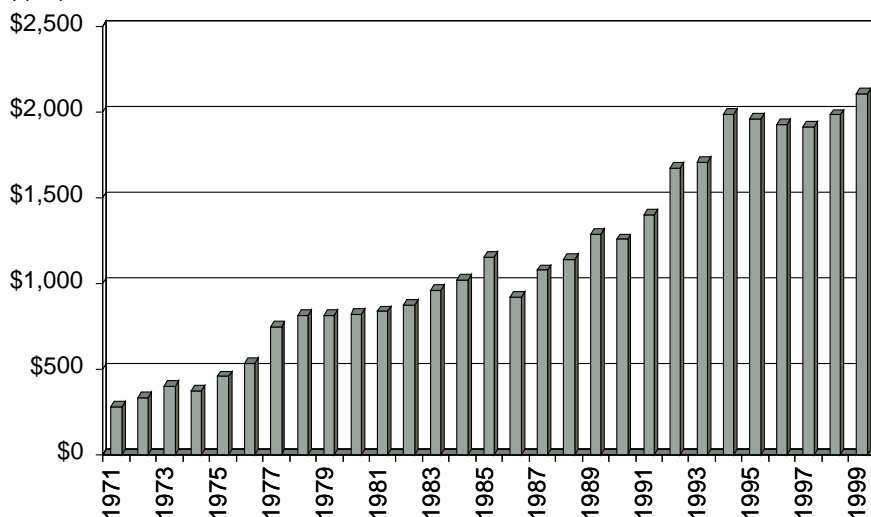


Chart above shows the breakdown of the NOAA fiscal year 1999 budget request by line office. (Note: PS is Program Support.)

Growth of NOAA Budget

Appropriation in Millions



NOAA's FY 1999 budget request of \$2.1 billion is a five percent increase over last year's request.

- \$151.2 million for continuing geostationary and polar weather satellite development and acquisition; and \$30.7 million to converge civilian and military polar-orbiting satellites.
- A total of \$55 million for the Natural Disaster Reduction Initiative (NDRI), which includes \$19.9 million to build on the modernized weather service infrastructure and improve flood forecasting and water management; improve national- and regional-scale weather prediction models; and enhance other disaster mitigation efforts. Additional increases for NDRI efforts are included in other areas of the NOAA budget to mitigate the effects of coastal hazards and to address air quality issues.
- \$33.6 million to continue the President's commitment to restore the wealth of America's fisheries,

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Focus On...

NOAA Research at Kyoto's Climate Change Conference

Dr. Daniel L. Albritton, Director of NOAA's Aeronomy Laboratory in Boulder, Colo., was the Science Advisor to the U.S. delegation at December's climate change conference in Kyoto, Japan, where NOAA science was an important part of the discussions and negotiations. His impressions follow:

The ancient city of Kyoto was the setting for a very future-oriented international meeting last December on climate change. The 10-day Third Conference of Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change culminated in the world's first climate protocol. If and when it is approved by the member nations, the "Kyoto Protocol" would set legally binding limits on greenhouse gas emissions for the first time.

NOAA IN THE SPOTLIGHT

NOAA's research played a key role in the discussions leading up to the historic Kyoto meeting and provided firm scientific footing for the decisions made there. In contributions dating back several years, NOAA scientists have made measurements of climate variables and atmospheric abundances of greenhouse gases, studied the "greenhouse" properties of gases and particles, and modeled the long-term climate to better understand and predict the natural and anthropogenic influences on it.



The many results of that research have been reflected in the "state-of-the-science" assessments on climate change that are prepared periodically by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), reports that played a key role in communicating scientific understanding to decision makers in Kyoto and in which NOAA scientists figure prominently as authors, contributors, and reviewers.

Heightened media attention in the months preceding the Kyoto meeting made NOAA's long-standing scientific expertise even more visible, as scientists from several of the Environmental Research Laboratories, the National Climatic Data Center, the Office of Global Programs, and the National Weather Service met the numerous requests for interviews. NOAA scientists Thomas Karl of the National Climatic Data Center, and Jerry Mahlman of the Geophysical Fluid Dynamics Laboratory, and Albritton gave briefings at congress-

sional hearings, to the White House press corps, to Cabinet members, and to an Administration-sponsored climate conference. NOAA scientists were specifically tapped for these roles related to the Kyoto meeting, and their contributions clearly underscore the Administration's confidence in NOAA for providing sound, unbiased scientific information on the topic of climate change.

THE KYOTO PROTOCOL'S KEY PROVISIONS

The 11 days of negotiations culminated in a Protocol in the early morning hours of December 11. Among the key provisions:

- **Tailored greenhouse gas emissions limits.** A group of 39 industrialized countries, including the U.S., would limit their annual average greenhouse gas emissions during the 2008-2012 time period to a specified percentage of their 1990 emissions. Country-by-country, the percentages (some reductions,

others increases) vary to reflect the differing realities faced by the nations. The U.S. target is a reduction of seven percent.

- **CO₂ and other gases: A “basket” of gases.** The emissions of not just carbon dioxide (CO₂), but six different categories of gases would be included in a “basket” approach. Adding to CO₂ are methane, nitrous oxide, hydrofluorocarbons, perfluorocarbons, and sulfur hexafluoride in what would be a greenhouse-weighted sum of emissions. The basket approach is consistent with the scientific reality that it is the sum of all greenhouse gases that influences climate change, and that countries might find some gases in the basket to be more economically and technically feasible to address than others.
- **“Sinks” enter the equation, too.** Certain specific human-influenced changes in carbon storage—planting or cutting down trees, for instance—would be counted in the emissions tally, subtracting from or adding to a Nation’s net emissions. This recognizes the scientific fact that the atmospheric abundances of greenhouse gases result from the net sum of emissions (sources) and removals (sinks). The specification of forestry in this provision of the Protocol recognizes that current scientific understanding limits the ability to evaluate other types of

greenhouse gas “sinks.”

- **Emissions trading and “bubbles.”** Within the 39 industrialized nations, a country could buy “emission credits” from another country whose emissions are less than their established quota. Further, nations could partner together in “bubbles” and contribute different individual levels of emission reductions to the agreed-upon overall reduction target for the bubble.
- **Developing countries.** The Protocol does not place emission-reduction requirements on the countries of the developing world, but it is agreed that the issue will be revisited at the next Meeting of the Parties to the Climate Convention in November.
- **Information input.** The Protocol will be reviewed periodically by the member nations in light of best available relevant information from updated scientific, technical, social, and economic information assessments. The Protocol noted the IPCC assessments, to which NOAA makes significant contributions, as a major source of assessed information.

WHAT NEXT?

It is noteworthy that the Kyoto Protocol, with its “baskets” and “bubbles” and “sinks,” has a flexibility that places an even greater

premium on quantified relevant knowledge, including scientific understanding. The Protocol implies several specific scientific information needs, to which NOAA will continue to make significant contributions in the coming years: How can we improve the characterization of greenhouse gases that are included in the Protocol “basket,” or may be in the future? Can we advance our understanding of how abruptly climate might shift, or how the frequency of climate extremes may be changing? Can we improve how well our climate models predict current and future climate? What new approaches will help us better discern the human influence on climate?

Much like the 1987 Montreal Protocol on ozone-depleting substances, the Kyoto climate protocol has a built-in recognition that scientific understanding evolves and improves, and it gives an explicit avenue by which the scientific community can communicate that improved understanding to decision makers (the IPCC assessment, to be updated next in 2001). Clearly the process has been and will continue to be substantially aided by information that is recognized by all as solid and unbiased and that is communicated to decision makers and the public in a user-friendly way by scientists who are known for telling the story straight. NOAA scientists will continue to be foremost among them. ☺

\$2.1B '99 Budget Request Shows 'Strong' White House Support

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- protect marine species faced with extinction, and conserve habitat important to living marine resources through the implementation of NOAA's management and research obligations under the Magnuson-Stevens Fisheries Conservation and Management Act, Endangered Species Act, Marine Mammal Protection Act, and other authorities.
- \$24.5 million to improve NOAA's coastal stewardship responsibilities, including total funding of \$22 million in support of the Clean Water Initiative, which will strengthen critical capabilities of NOAA's Coastal Zone Management Program and Coastal

Nonpoint Pollution Control Program and address outbreaks of *pfisteria* and other harmful algal blooms, and other symptoms of degraded coastal ecosystems.

- \$4.0 million needed to improve our understanding of climate and air quality and provide the scientific basis for national policy decisions in key environmental areas.
- \$39.6 million in FY 2000 for a fisheries research vessel, the first of four to be acquired through FY 2003. Funds to determine requirements and develop a design were provided in FY 1998.
- \$4.2 million to complete construction of the Santa Cruz Research Laboratory.

"This budget is based on the resources needed for NOAA to achieve its mission, as outlined in the NOAA Strategic Plan and the seven major agency goals, and the requirement to be more effective, to identify and realize opportunities for savings, and to focus the efforts of government on what matters to the people," said D. James Baker, NOAA administrator and under secretary for oceans and atmosphere.

NOAA's fiscal year 1999 budget is available on the web at <http://www.noaa.gov/budget>. ☺

Geodetic Data Now In New Web Format

High-resolution geodetic control data for the United States are now available on the Internet in a format compatible with Geographic Information System (GIS) software.

The new format is the Point Profile of the Spatial Data Transfer Standard (SDTS), which was developed by NOAA for high-precision point data. Internet users can retrieve the SDTS geodetic control data on-the-fly directly from a data base that is continuously updated by NOAA's National Geodetic Survey.

Geodetic data have been available on the World Wide Web for quite some time, but only in the standard "data sheet" format. Unlike the SDTS files, the data sheet format is a text file that is not easily loaded into a database or GIS software.

The data are available at <http://www.ngs.noaa.gov> (Select Products and Services, then select DataSheet). More information on the project is available at <http://www.ngdc.noaa.gov/seg/tools/sdts>. ☺

New Sanctuary Managers Named for Monterey, Hawaii

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sanctuary through the public designation process, before being named manager in January.

During the process of designation at the Hawaiian Sanctuary, Tom worked closely with the community, the sanctuary advisory council, state and Federal officials, native Hawaiian groups, and the research community. He also recruited more than 100 sanctuary volunteers, established a water quality monitoring program, and developed educational materials in the Hawaiian language.

"Allen's appointment ensures that the sanctuary will remain connected with the local community, and be viewed nationally and internationally as a model for the

protection of Hawaii's humpback whales," said Terry Garcia, NOAA's assistant secretary of oceans and atmosphere.

Prior to joining NOAA, Tom worked at the Hawaii Office of State Planning and the Hawaii Sea Grant program. Tom received a bachelor's degree in biology from the University of California Davis in 1983, and a master's degree in animal science/aquaculture in 1987 from the University of Hawaii.

As the sanctuaries move from designation to coastal and marine operations, ocean service officials are enthusiastic about the talents and commitment of these two scientists and the opportunity they provide for the California and Hawaii communities.

—Nancy O'Donnell ☺

Bi-Coastal Year of the Ocean Kickoff Links Washington and Monterey by Internet

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Sylvia Earle. Earle joined the kickoff from underwater in the main kelp forest tank at the Monterey Bay Aquarium to talk with the students about the future of the ocean. She was linked to Washington by an Internet video and audio connection.

"Any campaign of this magnitude would be incomplete if we didn't include our next generation," Daley said. "The children of our planet will take over our stewardship of the Earth and of the oceans. We have to instill a curiosity and respect for our ocean through our children if the ocean is to have a future."

"The Year of the Ocean public awareness campaign is aimed at both students and adults," said NOAA Administrator D. James Baker. "It will provide individuals and organizations with the opportunity to raise public awareness of the role the



Students from C.D. Hylton High School, Woodbridge, Va. and Loch Lomand Elementary School, Manassas, Va., ask questions through an Internet link with Dr. Sylvia Earle (on screen), underwater in a kelp tank at the Monterey Bay Aquarium.

ocean plays in our lives, and to initiate changes needed to sustain the

marine resources on which we depend."

The campaign includes a number of activities throughout the year with a variety of partners, both in the public and private sectors. The campaign includes a colorful poster of marine life donated by artist Steve Shachter; a companion guide talking about the species depicted on the poster; print and television public service announcements; a brochure that includes an insert with information about how to help the ocean; a Web site (www.yoto.com) and a toll-free number for people to get more information and materials. NOAA employees can get Year of the Ocean brochures and posters by e-mailing to michelle.crockett@noaa.gov. ☺



Year of the Ocean poster artist Steve Shachter signs copies of his work at the kickoff in the Commerce Department headquarters.

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Meteorological Society's 1998 Cleveland Abbe Award for Distinguished Service to Atmospheric Sciences by an Individual Jan. 14 at the society's 78th Annual Meeting in Phoenix.

According to the award's citation, Friday was honored "For his leadership of the implementation of the historic modernization and restructuring of the National Weather Service." Friday was NWS chief until his move to OAR last year.

Friday received a standing ovation from the audience of approximately 1,900 meeting attendees, sponsors and guests when he received the award from AMS president Ronald McPherson, who is also director of NOAA's National Centers for Environmental Prediction.

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Climate Centers Go to NESDIS: The nation's six Regional Climate Centers have found a new home with NESDIS. The centers provide regional climate data and products for users in public and private organizations on matters related to energy, agriculture, water resources, transportation, tourism, and human health.

The regional centers provide an additional link between NOAA's national climate centers—including the National Climatic Data Center, Asheville, N.C., and the Climate Prediction Center, Camp Springs, Md.—and constituencies at the state and local levels. The national centers, the regional centers, and the local state climatologists (a program also coordinated by the National Climatic Data Center), together with the private sector, form the backbone of a nationwide system of climate services. ☺



Corps Lt. Named Junior Officer of the Year

Lt. Guy T. Noll (center) of the NOAA Corps has been awarded the 1997 ACO Junior Officer of the Year Award by the National Association of Commissioned Officers for his extraordinary service to the Nation, NOAA, and the NOAA Corps.

Lt. Noll was cited for "...his laudable record as field operations officer aboard the NOAA ship *Rainier*..." Noll is flanked by his wife, Kathleen, and NOAA Corps director Adm. William Stubblefield.

Volunteer Tutor Honored in Va.

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entering school already at risk. She also entered into partnership with NASA to provide a Saturday Youth Program. This program introduces elementary and middle school children to a variety of science and math careers. One of the goals is to target minority middle-school children so that they will be motivated to maintain their academic focus throughout high school. These 30 minority children will provide a pool of eligible candidates for scientific internships that target sophomores and juniors.

Cropper-Conquest is the first and only minority woman to sit on the Accomack County School Board. She also chairs the Wallops CDA EEOAC Community Outreach Committee. She has also received a 1997 Jefferson Award from the Commonwealth of Virginia and the

Governor of Virginia's Business Education Partnership Award.

—Pat Viets ☺

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